

المنتدى الإسلامي

JUMUAH
مجلة الجمعة
هداية المسلم إلى تطبيق حياة إسلامية
Your Guide to an Islamic Life

رمضان
Ramadhan

circ_ryd@aljumuah.com

King Fahad National Library Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Al Jumu'ah **Magazine**
Ramadhan **– Riyadh, 2004**
76p: 21cm
ISBN: 9960-9406-6-7
1-Ramadan, Month of 1-Title
252.3 dc 1425/4917
L.D. no. 1425/4917
ISBN: 9960-9406-6-7



PREFACE

All praise is due to Almighty Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil of our own selves and from our sinful deeds. Whomever Allah guides, there is none to misguide him; and whomever He leaves astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger. May Allah bestow His peace and blessings upon Prophet Muhammad, upon his good and pure family, as well as all the noble companions and those who follow them in righteousness until the day of Reckoning.

Fasting is a unique moral and spiritual Islamic attribute. The main reason behind fasting is to attain piety. It is an act of worship that testifies to total submission and obedience. The hardship that the faithful endure while carrying out this obligation is insignificant in comparison with the noble objective of attaining Allah's pleasure and the great reward in the Hereafter.

Fasting helps the faithful develop a strong personality and character. It instills in them the quality of will power and determination. It also helps develop the virtue of displaying affection towards the poor and the distressed; for one can easily remember their condition when one undergoes the pangs of hunger. Fasting also nurtures a gentle forbearing character and teaches patience. It also provides the faithful with both spiritual growth and physical fitness. It strengthens the body and is a cure to many known diseases.

The present book, which was originally published in the form of articles in *Al-Jumu'ah* Magazine, discusses the noble obligation of *Ramadhan* with reference to a number of points. The first section discusses this noble obligation as to its meaning, pillars, conditions as well as those exempt from fasting. The second section delineates some of the virtues

and excellences of fasting during this month. It also shows how the faithful can make the best use of this month by suggesting a number of good righteous deeds the faithful can do with a view to gaining more rewards and attaining Allah's Pleasure.

The third section touches upon some common mistakes that many ignorant people make during this month.

The fourth and the fifth sections look at the issue of fasting for the traveler and the sick, respectively.

The sixth section tackles the issue of remaining steadfast after this blessed month, and the seventh section presents a wide variety of *fataawaa* (plural of *fatwaa*, or legal opinion) by a number of renowned Muslim scholars including Sheikh 'Abdul-Azeez Ibn Baaz, Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen, Sheikh Ibn Jibreen, Sheikh Muhammad Saalih al-Munajjid, and Sheikh Saaleh Al-Fawzaan. There are also some questions answered by the Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and *Fataawaa,* Saudi Arabia.

There is also another section which presents in an illustrative manner the actions that are bound to void the fast.

The present humble work does not pretend to be an exhaustive study of the subject. There is no intention to present the depth and breath of fasting in this work. Rather it attempts to provide the average Muslim reader with a brief introduction to the subject.

It is to be noted that all the ideas expressed here are substantiated with cogent evidence from the *Qur'an* and the authentic *Sunnah* of the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*. We pray that Allah accept this effort and make it of real benefit to all those who read it, for it is ultimately Allah's acceptance alone that really counts, and success is only by His will.

INTRODUCTION

Definition of *Siyaam* (Fasting)

Linguistically, *siyaam* or *sawm*, means abstaining from something, as is understood from the words of Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, that Maryam (Mary), peace be upon her, said, **"Verily! I have vowed a fast to [Allah] Most Gracious; I will therefore not speak this day to any human being."** (*Surah Maryam*, 19:26)

Technically, it is an act of worship which is done sincerely for the sake of Allah, whereby a person abstains from food, drink, and sexual intercourse from dawn till sunset.

Pillars of Fasting

1. The intention

Ascertaining the intention (*niyyah*) in the heart is the first pillar of undertaking this act of worship, and the place of intention is the heart. Uttering it verbally is a common mistake. In fact, the intention for any act of worship is not to be uttered verbally, since this is an innovation in religion (*bid'ah*). How, therefore, does one ascertain the intention for fasting? When a person takes the *sahoor*, i.e. pre-dawn meal, or goes to sleep while knowing he is going to fast the next day, this would be sufficient, as in the case when one observes an obligatory fast, whether it be the fast of Ramadhan, days missed from it, days one has vowed to fast or the like. The intention should be ascertained during the night. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Deeds are but by intention, and every person shall be rewarded according to his intention."** (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

Hafsah, *radiyallaahu 'anhaa*, narrated that the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Whoever does not ascertain [the intention] for his fast before the *Fajr***

prayer, his fast will not be valid." (an-Nasaa'ee, At-Tirmidhee, Abu Daawud, and others, *Saheeh*).

As for the supererogatory fast, there is no harm if a person intends to fast during the day, even after sunrise, as long as he has not done something that is bound to nullify the fast. 'A'ishah, *radiyallaahu 'anhaa*, said that the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, asked her [one morning], **"Do you have anything [to eat]?' and when she replied in the negative, he said, "In that case I am fasting [today]."** (Muslim)

2. To observe fast at the appropriate time

It is compulsory upon the believer to observe fast from *Fajr* (dawn) until *Maghrib* (sunset). Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, says, **"Eat and drink until the white thread of dawn appears to you distinct from its black thread. Then strictly observe the fast until nightfall."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:187)

'Adi ibn Haatim, *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, once said, "When the verse **'Eat and drink until the white thread of dawn appears to you distinct from its black thread...'** was revealed, I took a black thread and a white thread and placed them underneath my pillow; during the night I looked at them to see if I could distinguish between them. In the morning I went to Allah's Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and mentioned that to him and he said, **"It is the blackness of night and the whiteness of dawn."** (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

3. To abstain from acts that nullify the fast

The acts that nullify the fast fall into two categories; Those in the first category only require one to make up for the missed fast, while those in the second category require one to make up for the missed day as well as make expiation.

Acts in the first category include deliberate consumption of food and drink, deliberate swallowing of water while gargling, self-induced vomiting and seminal discharge by self-gratification. Acts in the second category involve sexual intercourse during the day in *Ramadhan*, and therefore one has to make up for the missed fast as well as make expiation. This can be done by freeing a slave. If one cannot do this, one must fast for sixty consecutive days. If this, too, is not possible, one must feed sixty poor people from the average food which one normally gives one's own family.

Conditions of Fasting

In general, fasting is incumbent on every sane, adult Muslim, male or female, who is not a traveler, i.e. he or she is a resident. He or she should also be in sound health, in case fasting becomes detrimental to recovery. Women also should not be in the period of menstruation or the post-natal bleeding period.

People exempted from fasting:

1. The *kaafir* (non-Muslim), since Islam is the primary condition for any good deed to be valid and accepted by Allah. Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, says, **"Truly, the only accepted religion with Allah is Islam."** (*Surah Aal 'Imraan,* 3:19) He also says, **"Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will not be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter he will be among the losers."** (*Surah Aal 'Imraan,* 3:85)

2. The insane person since he will not be held accountable for his acts. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"The pen is lifted from three [types of people](That is their words and deeds are not recorded): the person who is asleep until he wakes up, the child until he reaches puberty and the insane person until he comes to his senses."**

3. Children are not required to fast the month of *Ramadhan.* A child is considered an adult when he/she turns fifteen, or when he/she experiences a wet dream, seminal discharge (for the boys), or his/her pubic hair grows thick. As for the girl, she is also considered an adult when she starts menstruating.

When a child reaches the age of puberty, he/she has to fast even if he/she has not turned fifteen.

It is commendable that the parents train their children to fast from a tender age, for this will help them become accustomed to it and psychologically prepared for it. This was also the practice of our Pious Predecessors.

4. The incapable, such as the sick and chronically ill. Sickness is of three kinds:

a. Minor ailments such as a headache. A person who suffers from such ailment must fast and cannot break his fast due to this minor ailment.

b. Sickness that is bound to do a great deal of harm the individual who is fasting. It is unlawful for such a person to fast. Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, says, **"And kill not yourselves."** (*Surah An-Nisaa'*, 4:29)

c. Sickness that makes it difficult for a person to fast but does not do him any harm. It is better for such a person to abstain from fasting.

Furthermore, the sick whose recovery is expected can fast if so they wish; however, if they choose not to, they will have to make up for the number of days they have missed after *Ramadhan*. Allah says, **"But whoever is sick or is on a journey shall fast the same number of days [he has missed]."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah,* 2:185) As for the sick whose recovery is not expected, they should feed a poor person for each day they have missed.

People who are too old and feeble to fast and those who are chronically ill and whose recovery is not likely must offer one needy poor Muslim an average full meal for each day they

miss, since they are not likely to improve and thus be able to fast other days; instead, they are required to pay a *fidyah* (ransom) for each day missed. Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, says, **"And upon those who can afford it (i.e. the fast of *Ramadhan*, but with hardship) a ransom [as a substitute] of feeding a poor person [each day]."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:184).

Commenting on this verse, 'Abdullaah Ibn 'Abbaas, *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, said, "[This verse] is not abrogated; it concerns the aged men and women who are able to fast but with difficulty, and instead choose to feed a poor person for each day [they do not fast]."

Abu Ya'laa narrated in his *Musnad* that Ayyoob ibn Abi Tameemah said, **"When Anas could no longer fast, he would make a plate of *thareed* (a dish of sopped bread, meat and broth) and invite thirty poor persons and feed them."**

5. The traveler. Allah says, **"But whoever is sick or is on a journey shall fast the same number of days [he has missed]."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:185)

A traveler who takes a journey for a distance, which allows one to shorten one's prayer, may break his fast and make up for the missed days afterwards, or he may fast if so he wishes.

Travel is of three types:

a. Travel which entails difficulties and hardships and thus make fasting unbearable. In this case, it is unlawful for a person to fast. Jaabir, *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, narrated that Allah's Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said to those who observed fast when the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, broke his due to the difficulties people were facing, **"They are indeed sinners."** (Muslim)

b. Travel which entails some difficulties; in this case, it would be better for one to break one's fast

c. If fasting or not fasting is the same for a person, it is up to him to either fast or not. If he does not, he has to make up for the days he has missed.

6. Expectant mothers and breastfeeding women may also break the fast if its observance is likely to endanger their own health or that of their infants. However, they will have to make up for the fast at a delayed date. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Allah has waived fasting from the traveler and allowed him to shorten prayer, and He waived fasting from the pregnant and the nursing women."** (*Imam* Ahmed & others)

7. Women during their menses or post-natal period (*nifaas*). Jurists are unanimously agreed that women during menstrual or post-natal period must not observe fasting; they must make up for the days they missed after *Ramadhan*.

REAPING THE BENEFITS OF *RAMADHAN*

Al-Jumuah Magazine, Vol. 7 Issue 6

Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, says, **"O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you that you may attain piety."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:183) Allah has favored *Ramadhan* over other months for its numerous merits and virtues. These include:

- The very smell of the mouth of a fasting person is more agreeable to Allah than the scent of musk.
- The fasting person has two moments of joy: one when he breaks his fast and one when he meets his Lord and rejoices over his fasting (Muslim)
- The angels continue asking Allah's forgiveness for those fasting until they break their fast.
- Allah beautifies His Paradise each day and addresses it thus, **"My righteous servants are about to be spared suffering and harm, then they will be sent to you."**
- In Paradise, there is a gate called *ar-Rayyaan*, through which those who fast will enter, and no one else will enter it except them. **"When they have entered it will be locked, and no one else will enter through it."** (Al-Bukhaaree)
- The gates of Paradise are opened, the gates of Hell are locked, and the devils are chained.
- Allah has chosen fasting for Himself, and He will reward it and multiply the reward without measure, as He says [in the *hadeeth qudsee*]: **"Except for fasting which is only for My sake, and I will reward for it."** (Al-Bukhaaree)

- Fasting will intercede for a person on the Day of Judgment and will say, **"O Lord, I prevented him from his food and physical desires during the day, so let me intercede for him."** (Ahmad. Al-Haythamee classified its *isnaad* as *hasan* in *al-Majma'*, 3/181. *Saheeh al-Targheeb*)
- The Night of Decree (*Laylat-ul-Qadr*), which excels a thousand months, occurs during this month, and the person who offers prayers on this night with faith and the hope of reward shall be pardoned of all his past sins.
- Those fasting receive forgiveness of their sins on the last night of *Ramadhan*.
- Allah saves a number of people from Hellfire during each night of *Ramadhan*.

How then should we receive this month that has all these merits and virtues? Is it by occupying ourselves with playfulness? Is it by spending its days sleeping and its nights in idle talk and useless activities? Should we feel panic and a great burden on our shoulders upon its arrival?

The righteous servants of Allah welcome it with repentance and dogged determination to fully reap its benefits and put its precious time to good use. The true believers avail themselves of Allah's special mercy during this month and spend their time performing beneficial deeds. These include:

1. Offering the *taraaweeh* and *qiyaam-ul-layl prayers*

The Messenger of Allah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Whoever stands to pray in *Ramadhan* with sincere faith and hope for the reward of Allah will have his past sins forgiven."** (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) Waking up in the dead of night to pray was a regular practice of the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and his companions. 'A'ishah,

radiyallaahu 'anhaa, said, **"Do not abandon *qiyyaam-ul-layl*, for the Messenger of Allah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, never left it. If he happened to be unwell or if he felt tired, he would pray sitting."**

Completing the *Taraweeh* prayer with the *imam* is counted as standing the whole night in prayer. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"He who continues [in prayer] with the *imam* until he completes *salaat-ul-qiyaam*** (*that is the Taraweeh prayer*)**, Allah will record for him [the reward of performing prayer for] the whole night."** (At-Tirmidhee and others)

2. Giving charity (*sadaqah*)

Ibn 'Abbaas, *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, said, "The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, was the most generous amongst the people, and he would be more so in the month of *Ramadhan* when Jibreel (Gabriel) visited him, and Jibreel was in the habit of meeting him on every night of *Ramadhan* till the end of the month. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, would recite the Qur'an to Jibreel, and when Jibreel met him, he would be more generous than the fair wind [sent by Allah with rain] in readiness and haste to do charitable deeds." (Al-Bukhaaree) The Messenger of Allah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, also said, **"The best charity is the charity given in *Ramadhan*."** (At-Tirmidhee)

3. Reciting the *Qur'an*

Ramadhan is the month in which the first revelation of the *Qur'an* took place. Muslims, therefore, should recite the *Qur'an* even more than usual. A number of companions used to complete the recitation of the *Qur'an* within three, seven or ten nights. However, the Pious Predecessors of this *Ummah* did not chant the *Qur'an* like poetry without pondering and understanding its meanings. Al-Bayhaqee related that Abu Hurairah, *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, said, "When the Qur'anic verse **'Do you then wonder at this Recital (of the Qur'an), and**

you laugh and weep not?' (*Surah An-Najm*, 53:59-60) was revealed, the companions residing in the *Suffah* (courtyard of the Prophet's Mosque) wept until tears began to trickle down their cheeks. When the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, heard their weeping he wept with them and his weeping made us weep." The Messenger of Allah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Whoever weeps from fear to Allah will not enter Hellfire."**

4. Sitting in the mosque until sunrise

Whenever the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, offered the *Fajr* prayer, he would remain seated in his place of prayer, remembering Allah and glorifying Him, until sunrise. Anas reported that the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Whoever offers the *Fajr* prayer in congregation and remains seated, remembering Allah until sunrise, then performs two *rak'at*, it will be for him as the reward of a complete act of *Hajj* and *'Umrah*."** He repeated the word 'complete' three times. This is the reward Allah has promised the believers in ordinary days. Can you imagine how great the reward during *Ramadhan* would be?

5. Observing *i'tikaaf*

'A'ishah, *radiyallaahu 'anhaa*, narrated that the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, used to observe *i'tikaaf* in the last ten days of *Ramadhan* until he passed away, then his wives observed it after him. (Al-Bukhaaree) *I'tikaaf* (seeking retirement in the mosque during the last ten days of the fast of *Ramadhan*, with a view to drawing closer to Allah) is an act of worship which embraces a large number of acts of obedience to Allah, such as reciting the *Qur'an*, offering prayers, remembering Allah and supplicating Him.

Those who have not gone through such experience might suspect that this practice would be too difficult to bear. In fact,

it is easy for those who arm themselves with true determination and the intention of seeking Allah's Pleasure alone. *I'tikaaf* is emphasized more during the last ten days of *Ramadhan* in anticipation of *Laylat-ul-Qadr*. It is a commendable, but not obligatory, act of worship.

6. Performing *'Umrah* during *Ramadhan*

The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Performing '*Umrah* in *Ramadhan* is equal in reward to performing *Hajj*."** (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) In another version the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Performing '*Umrah* in *Ramadhan* is equal in reward to performing *Hajj* with me."**

7. Seeking *Laylat-ul-Qadr*

Allah says, **"We have indeed revealed this [Qur'an] on the Night of Decree (*Laylat-ul-Qadr*); and what will explain to you what the Night of Decree is? The Night of Decree is better than a thousand months."** (*Surah Al-Qadr*, 97:1-3). The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, also said in this regard, **"Whoever offers prayers during *Laylat-ul-Qadr* with firm belief and the hope of reward from Allah shall be pardoned of all his past sins."** (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, would seek *Laylat-ul-Qadr* and instruct his Companions to do so. He would wake up his family members during the last ten nights of this month so they would spend these blessed nights in worship. *Laylat-ul-Qadr* occurs during one of the odd nights of the last ten days of *Ramadhan*.

8. Remembering Allah, supplicating Him and seeking His forgiveness

Indeed, the days and the nights of *Ramadhan* are exceptional times that provide a golden opportunity for the faithful to

remember Allah and supplicate Him more, especially during the specified times when invocations are more likely to be answered. These times include:

- Upon breaking the fast, since the fasting person's supplications are not rejected at this time.
- During the last third of the night, when our Lord descends to the lowermost heaven and says, **"Who is calling Me, so that I may answer him? Who is asking Me so that may I grant him? Who is seeking forgiveness from Me so that I may forgive him?"** (Al-Bukhaaree)
- Just before dawn.
- During an hour on Friday. This hour is most likely to be towards the end of the day (between the '*Asr* and the *Maghrib* prayers).

It is worth mentioning here that in order for our deeds to be accepted, they must be done sincerely for the sake of Allah alone and in accordance with the Prophet's teachings. It is for this reason that our Pious Predecessors performed righteous deeds in secret for fear of showing off (*riyaa'*).

COMMON MISTAKES DURING FASTING

Sheikh 'Abdul Azeez M. As-Sadhaan
Al-Jumuah Magazine, Vol. 10, Issue 8/9

Mistakes that seem trivial to some people while observing the fast can negatively affect their fast. We will look at some of these mistakes in this section in order to be aware of them and thus improve and perfect our fast for the sake of Allah.

- **Failure to sniff water into the nostrils during ablution**

Some people fail to sniff water into their nostrils properly while performing ablution so much so that sometimes only the tip of the nose is washed. This was not the practice of the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, who said, "**Whoever performs ablution should sniff water into his nose and then blow it out.**" This *hadeeth* was reported by Al-Bukhaaree who added, "The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, did not differentiate between the fasting and non-fasting person in this respect. A fasting person, however, is commanded not to exaggerate while doing so. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, "Exaggerate while sniffing unless you are fasting." *Imam* As-San'aanee said, "This *hadeeth* is evidence to exaggerate the [act of] sniffing [water into the nostrils] when not fasting. Exaggeration is not allowed when fasting in case some water goes down the throat and thus invalidates the fast."

- **Failure to abstain from food and drink when the muezzin calls to the *Fajr* prayer**

Some people carry on eating or drinking even after the muezzin has started calling to the *Fajr* prayer. If they are counseled they say it is allowed until the muezzin says "*Hayya 'alal falaah*" (come to success), which is the time they commence their fast. This opinion can only be correct if there is strong evidence from the *Qur'an* or the authentic *Sunnah*. Even though there is no evidence whatsoever in these

sources, this remains the practice of a number of people. This erroneous practice is rejected by the *hadeeth* in which the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"He who innovates something in this matter of ours (Islam) that is not part of it will have it rejected."** (Al-Bukhaaree) Another version by Muslim reads: **"He who does an act which our matter (religion) is not [in agreement] with will have it rejected."** In addition, the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* clearly state that *imsaak* (the time of abstention from food, drink and sexual intercourse) begins when the white thread of dawn becomes distinct from the black thread of the night. At this particular point, one must stop eating and drinking. Allah says, **"And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct to you from the black thread [of night]."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:187) 'A'ishah, *radiyallaahu 'anhaa*, narrated that Bilaal, *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, used to announce the *adhaan* at night, so Allah's Messenger, *sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Carry on taking your meals till Ibn Umm Maktoom announces the *adhaan*, for he does not announce it till it is dawn."** (Al-Bukhaaree) Ibn Umm Maktoom was a blind man who did not call to prayer until he was told it was time. The previous *Qur'anic* verse and *hadeeth* make it clear that *imsaak* should start at dawn and that the *adhaan* is a sign of it. Therefore, the time for *imsaak* begins as soon as the muezzin starts the call to prayer, and not when he says "*Haya 'alal falaah.*"

- **Taking the *sahoor* meal too early**

Taking the *sahoor* (pre-dawn meal) too early is another common mistake. The person who does so misses the opportunity of gaining the great blessings and rewards associated with the correct time of performing this action. A Muslim should follow in the footsteps of the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, by delaying the *sahoor*. Anas, *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, narrated from Zaid ibn Thaabit who said, **"We took the *sahoor* with the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and then we prayed. I asked, 'What was the interval between the *sahoor* time and the *adhaan*? He**

replied, 'The interval was sufficient to recite fifty verses of the Qur'an." (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

- **Delaying the call to the *Maghrib* Prayer**

Another common mistake is that some muezzins call to the *Maghrib* prayer when it becomes completely dark. They claim that they should do so in order to be on the safe side, and so they delay it long after the sun has set. This practice goes against the teachings of Islam which state that the call to the prayer must be made immediately after the sun has set. Allah says, **"Then complete your fast until the night appears (i.e. sunset)."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:187)

Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, commands that the fast is to be broken as soon as the night begins; that is when the sun sets completely. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"When the night falls from this side and the day vanishes from this side and the sun sets, then the fasting person should break his fast."** (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) Commenting on the abovementioned *Qur'anic* verse, *Imam* Ahmad Ibn Nasr Al-Marwazee, said, "Muslim scholars are agreed that the sunset signals the beginning of the night, and it is the time to break the fast."

- **Delaying the *iftaar***

Another common mistake is delaying the *iftaar* (breaking the fast). Two points need to be mentioned regarding this matter. Firstly, delaying the *iftaar* can result in delaying the *Maghrib* prayer, or missing it altogether, which is even more serious. Therefore, a Muslim must break his fast on time in order to catch the congregational prayer in the mosque. Secondly, delaying the *iftaar* contravenes the *Sunnah* of the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and testifies to the following in the footsteps of the Jews and the Christians. Sahl Ibn Sa'd narrated that the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"The people will continue to prosper as long as they hasten to break the fast."** (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) He also narrated that the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*,

said, **"My followers will remain upon my *Sunnah* as long as they do not await the stars to rise when breaking their fast."** (Ibn Hibbaan). Abu Hurairah also narrated that the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Our religion will continue to reign supreme as long as people hasten to break their fast; the Jews and the Christians delay breaking it."** (Abu Daawud and Ibn Hibbaan)

- **Failure to use the *siwaak***

Another mistake related to fasting is some people's belief not to use the *siwaak* (traditional stick taken from the *Araak* tree roots and used for cleaning the teeth) in the afternoon and disapprove of those who do so. They argue that the odor from the mouth of the fasting person is removed by using the *siwaak*, while Allah says that this odor is more pleasing to him than the fragrance of musk. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"By Him in whose Hand my soul is, the odor coming from the mouth of a fasting person is better with Allah than the fragrance of musk."** (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) *Imam* Ash-Shawkaanee referred to this *hadeeth* when he discussed the difference of opinion regarding whether the odor from the mouth of the fasting person is supposed to be in this life or in the hereafter. He said, "Due to this dispute, it was stated that the use of the *siwaak* is disliked when fasting." Then he added, "In fact, it is commendable for the fasting person to use the *siwaak* both in the morning and in the late afternoon. This is the opinion of the majority of Muslim scholars." The permissibility to use the *siwaak* is also proven by the following general statement of the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: **"Were it not that I might overburden my followers, I would have ordered them to use the *siwaak* at the time of every prayer."** (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) *Imam* Al-Bukhaaree said, "The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, did not distinguish in this *hadeeth* between a fasting person or a non-fasting person." Al-Bukhaaree also said, "It is mentioned that the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, used to clean his teeth with *siwaak* while observing *sawm*, and Ibn 'Umar used to

clean his teeth with *siwaak* in the early and the late hours of the day without swallowing the resultant saliva [while observing *sawm*].

- **Experiencing feelings of guilt when waking up in a state of *janaabah***

Some people feel guilty when they wake up in a state of *janaabah* (defilement due to sexual intercourse with one's spouse or as a result of a wet dream). They should not feel guilty at all. Rather, they should take a bath (*ghusl*) and observe the fast. A'ishah related that at times the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, used to get up at dawn in a state of *janaabah* after having sexual intercourse with his wives. He would then take a bath and observe the fast. (Al-Bukhaaree)

Sheikh Abdul-Azeez ibn Baaz was once asked regarding a fasting person who had a wet dream in *Ramadhan*. Would this wet dream invalidate his fast and would this person be required to take a bath? He replied that wet dreams do not invalidate the fast because it is an involuntary act, and that a bath is only necessary as in the case of ejaculation. It is permissible to delay the bath until the *Dhuhr* prayer if the wet dream occurs after the *Fajr* prayer. The same applies to the state of *janaabah*. A bath can be taken after dawn if the sexual intercourse takes place during the night. It is established that the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, used to wake up in a state of *janaabah*, take a bath and then fast. However, it is better to take this bath before the *Fajr* prayer in order to be able to pray in congregation.

- **Feeling guilty when tasting food**

Some women are reluctant to taste food for fear this act might invalidate their fast. There is no need for this reluctance or feelings of guilt as long as no food is swallowed. Ibn 'Abbaas, *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, said, **"There is no harm in tasting the food of the pots or other meals."** (Al-Bukhaaree)

FASTING FOR THE TRAVELER

Al-Jumuah Magazine, Vol. 9, Issue 9

- **Those who travel to purposely avoid fasting**

Those Muslims who travel to purposely avoid fasting have no legitimate excuse for not fasting. This being the case, they are not exempt from the obligation of fasting. They should fast and repent to Allah for this form of dishonesty.

- **Those who find it difficult to fast while traveling**

Those who find it difficult to fast while traveling should not fast, but they are required to make up for the days they missed after *Ramadhan.*

Jaabir, *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, narrated: **"We went out with the Prophet to Makkah on the year of the conquest [of Makkah]. He fasted and we fasted with him. When we reached al-Ghameem, the Prophet was told that it was becoming hard for people to fast, and that they were waiting to see what he would decide. After the *'Asr* prayer the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, asked for a cup of water and drank from it while they were looking at him."** (Muslim)

Jabir also narrated: **"Once, while Allah's Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, was on a journey, he saw a crowd of people gathering around a man in order to shade him [from the sun]. He asked, 'What is going on?' They said that the man was fasting. He said, 'It is not an act of righteousness to fast on a journey.'"** (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

However, it is better for those who can fast without enduring any hardship whatsoever to fast on a journey. Abud-Dardaa', *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, once said, "We set out with Allah's Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, on one of his journeys on an intensely hot day so much so that a person would place his hand on his heads [in order to protect himself] against the excessive heat. None amongst us was fasting except the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and 'Abdullaah Ibn Rawaahah. (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

Anas Ibn Maalik said, "I was traveling with the Messenger of Allah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, in *Ramadhan*. Those [amongst us] who fasted did not blame those who did not fast, neither did those who did not fast blame those who fasted." (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

- **Those for whom observing the fast or not is equally easy**

It is better for such people to fast as they will feel more encouraged to fast when other Muslims are fasting. In fact, this was the practice of the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

In conclusion, the ruling regarding fasting for the traveler is that he can do whatever is easier for him. Allah says, **"Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:185)

FASTING FOR THE SICK

Al-Jumuah Magazine, Vol. 9, Issue 9

There are two types of sick persons:

1. The first type: A person who has a disease, with no known cure, which impairs his ability to fast

Such a person is exempt from fasting. However, he has to compensate for the days he missed by feeding one poor person for each day of fasting which he missed. This can be done by gathering a number of poor people, equivalent to the number of missed days of fasting, and feeding them. This is exactly what Anas ibn Maalik, *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, did when he got older and could not fast. Otherwise, one can distribute food to those poor people. The quantity of food to be given to each one should be a quarter of a *saa' nabawee* (a measure of capacity that is equal to about 510 grams of good quality rice or cereal products). It would be better to add a fatty ingredient to this, such as meat or sauce.

The same ruling also applies to someone who cannot fast due to old age. Such a person has to feed one poor person for each day of fasting which he missed. Allah says, **"O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become pious. [Fasting] is for a fixed number of days, but if any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number [should be made up] from days later. As for those who are able to fast with difficulty, they have [a choice either to fast or] to feed a poor person [for every day], but whoever does good of his own accord, it is better for him. And it is better for you to fast, if only you knew."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:183-184)

2. The second type: A person whose sickness is curable. This type comprises three different categories:

a. A person who is only slightly sick, and fasting is neither harmful nor difficult for him
It is obligatory for such a person to fast, as he has no legitimate excuse not to fast.

b. A person for whom fasting is difficult but not harmful
It would be preferable for such a person not to fast. In fact, Allah has given people who find it difficult to fast permission to break their fast. This is a concession from Allah that one should accept. If someone insists upon fasting, when it is difficult for him to do so, he is in fact rejecting Allah's concession. Allah says, **"Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:185)

When such a person is cured from his illness, he should fast an equivalent number of days in order to make up for the days he missed due to his illness. However, if he dies before being cured, he will not be held accountable for these missed days. This is because the command to make up for these days applies only after he is cured. This command is not applicable in the case of those who die before they are able to make up for the days they have missed.

c. A person for whom fasting may be harmful
The possibility of harm can be determined either by the sick person himself or by a reliable Muslim doctor who will inform the person whether fasting will do him any harm. For such a person fasting is forbidden (*haraam*) because of the harm which it is bound to cause him. Allah says, **"And do not kill yourselves [nor kill one another]. Surely, Allah is Most Merciful to you."** (*Surah An-Nisaa'*, 4:29) Allah also says, **"And do not throw yourselves into destruction."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:195) Likewise, the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Your body has a right over you."** (Al-Bukhaaree)

REMAINING STEADFAST AFTER *RAMADHAN*

Sheikh Saaleh Al-Fawzaan

Ahaadeeth-Us-Siyyaam: Ahkaam wa Aadaab © Huda *Ramadhan* 1419 AH

Sufyaan ibn 'Abdullaah, *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, once addressed the Prophet, *sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, thus **"O Messenger of Allah, tell me something about Islam which I cannot ask anyone else besides you." He said, "Say: 'I believe in Allah' and thereafter be steadfast [upon that]."** (*Saheeh* Muslim)

This *hadeeth* is proof that the servant is obligated, after his belief in Allah, to persevere and be steadfast in obeying Him by performing the obligatory acts and avoiding the prohibited ones. This can be achieved by following the Straight Path, which is the firm religion without drifting away from it, whether to the right or to the left.

If a Muslim lives through *Ramadhan*, spent its days in fasting and its nights in prayer and he accustomed himself to doing righteous deeds, then he must maintain this obedience to Allah at all times. This is the true state of the slave, for indeed, the Lord of the months is One, and He is ever watchful and witness over His servants at all times.

Indeed, to remain steadfast in purifying one's words and deeds even after *Ramadhan* is a clear indication that one has [greatly] gained benefit from the month of *Ramadhan* and has striven hard in performing acts of obedience. In fact, these are signs of success as well as signs of the acceptance of one's deeds.

It is worth mentioning that a servant's [good] deeds should not end with the end of a month and the beginning of another; rather they should continue until he dies. Allah says, **"And worship your Lord until there comes to you the hour that is certain (i.e. death)."** (*Surah al-Hijr*, 15:99)

If the fast of *Ramadhan* ends, then indeed voluntary fasts can be observed throughout the entire year. If standing in prayer at night during *Ramadhan* ends, then indeed the entire year is a time for performing the night prayer. Likewise, if the *Zakaat-ul-Fitr* ends, then there is still the *Zakaah* that is obligatory as well as the voluntary charity that lasts for the whole year. This also applies to the recitation of the Qur'an and the understanding of its meanings as well as every other righteous deed that is sought, for they all can be done at all times. One of the countless bounties that Allah has bestowed upon his [obedient] servants is that He has placed before them many different types of righteous deeds and provided for them numerous means to do such deeds. Therefore, a Muslim's zeal for obeying Allah should not wane and his eagerness to serve Him should be constant.

Deplorably enough, some people do various types of righteous deeds only during *Ramadhan*. They observe the five daily prayers in the mosque, recite the Qur'an regularly and give in charity. However, when *Ramadhan* is over, they grow lazy in their worship. To make matters worse, sometimes they even neglect certain obligations such the congregational prayers and the *Fajr* prayer.

Furthermore, they commit forbidden acts such as sleeping during the time of the obligatory prayers, wasting precious time in places of foolishness and entertainment, and freely mingling in parks, especially on the *'Eed* day. Obtaining help from these evils is only through the grace of Allah. Thus, they demolish what they have constructed and destroy what they have established. This is an indication of deprivation and a sign of carelessness. We ask Allah to safeguard us.

Furthermore, they believe that turning to Allah in repentance and giving up evil deeds is restricted to the month of *Ramadhan*. As soon as the month ends they stop doing these good acts. Thus, it is as if they have abandoned sins

for the sake of *Ramadhan*, and not out of fear of Allah. How evil are those who do not know Allah except in *Ramadhan*!

Truly, the success that Allah grants His servant lies in the fasting of *Ramadhan*. His assisting him to do that is a great favor, thus the calls for the servant to be grateful to his Lord. This understanding can be found in the statement of Allah after completing the favor of the month of fasting: **"[He wants that you] must complete the same number of days, and that you must glorify Allah for having guided you, so that you may be grateful to Him."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:185)

The person who is truly grateful for having fasted is the one who remains upon that condition and continue to perform righteous deeds.

In fact, the true and sincere Muslim is one who praises and thanks his Lord for enabling him to fast and stand in prayer at night. His condition after *Ramadhan* is better than it was before *Ramadhan*. He is more eager to obey, desiring to do good deeds and quick to carry out the obligatory acts. This is because he has gained benefit form this prominent educational institution. True and sincere Muslims fear that fast may not be accepted, for indeed Allah only accepts from those who fear Him.

The righteous predecessors would struggle to complete and perfect their deeds, hoping afterwards, that it would be accepted and fearing that it would be rejected. From the reports of 'Alee, "Be more concerned with having your deeds accepted than the deed itself. Did you not hear Allah say: **'Verily Allah only accepts those from those who fear Him. (i.e. possess *taqwaa*).**'?" (*Surah Al-Maa'idah*, 5:27] (*Lataa'if-ul Ma'aarif*, p. 246)

'A'ishah said, "I asked the Messenger of Allah concerning the ayah: **'And the one who are given what they are given and their hearts tremble with fear.'** Are they the ones who drink

alcohol and steal?" He said, "No, O daughter of as-Siddeeq. Rather, they are the ones who fast and pray and give in charity yet fear that these [acts] will not be accepted from them. They are the ones who rush to do good deeds and they are the first to do them." (*Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhee*: 3/79-80

So be warned and again be warned of turning backward after having attained guidance of going astray after persevering. Ask Allah to assist you in doing righteous deeds and persevering in doing so. Also ask Allah that He grant you a good ending, so that He may accept our *Ramadhan* from us.

MISCELLANEOUS *FATAAWAA*

The ruling and wisdom behind fasting

Q. What is the ruling of and the wisdom behind fasting?

A. As for the wisdom behind fasting, Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, says, **"O you who believe! Fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those who came before you that you may attain *taqwaa* (piety)."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:183). *Taqwaa* encompasses all that people have mentioned with regard to the wisdom behind fasting. In fact, *taqwaa* is a comprehensive word for everything that Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa,* loves and is pleased with; this includes both the execution of the commendable acts and the abandonment of the prohibited acts. Fasting is [one of the] greatest means to attain this goal, which will [certainly] bring about happiness for the servant in his worldly life and his Hereafter. The fasting person seeks closeness to Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, by restraining his desires—giving precedence to the love of Allah over the love of himself. For this reason, Allah attributes [fasting] to Himself, as has been mentioned in the authentic *hadeeth* [by Al-Bukhaaree in which the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Fasting is Mine and it is I who give reward for it. [A man] gives up his sexual passion, his food and his drink for My Sake.**"]. Fasting constitutes one of the principles of *taqwaa*, as Islam is not complete without it. It helps increase our faith as well as indoctrinate in us patience. It provides training for our soul to bear the hardships that are bound to bring us closer to the Lord of the Heavens.

Fasting helps increase one's good deeds, through [such acts as] the offering of prayers, recitation of the Qur'an, remembrance of Allah and giving in charity that are bound to help one attain *taqwaa*. It also helps prevent one from committing prohibited acts in both words and deeds. Doing so constitutes the pillar of *taqwaa*. The Prophet, *sallallaahu*

'alayhi wa sallam, said in an authentic *hadeeth* [related by Al-Bukhaaree], **"Whoever does not abandon false speech and acting upon it, Allah cares not about his leaving off eating and drinking."** Therefore, the servant seeks closeness to Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, in *Ramadhan* by avoiding prohibited acts altogether. Among these are **(1)** 'false speech', which means every forbidden speech, and **(2)** 'acting upon it', which means every forbidden action; the servant also [strives hard to] leave every forbidden matter that spoils the fast or renders it invalid. Thus, since fasting has [countless] advantages and [helps one] obtain a tremendous reward and a great deal of good which necessitates its prescription, Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, told us that it was prescribed for us as it had been prescribed for those before us. That is the way of Allah with all of His Laws that have universal advantages.

As for the ruling of fasting, it could be obligatory, recommended, permissible, disliked, or forbidden depending on the circumstances:

1. **The obligatory fast** includes fasting the month *Ramadhan* for every sane, adult Muslim who is physically able to do so. It also includes the fast that a person vows to perform as well as the fasts of expiation [after having done an act obligating fasting.]
2. **The prohibited fast** includes **(1)** fasting the day of doubt (i.e. the day one is doubtful whether it is the first day or not or the last day of Ramadan or not), **(2)** fasting the 11th, 12th, and 13th of *Dhul-Hijjah*, except for the person who is doing *Hajj at-Tamattu'* or *Hajj al-Qiraan* but does not have a sacrificial animal and did not fast before the Day of Sacrifice, **(3)** the fast of menstruating women and women with postpartum bleeding, **(4)** the fast of a person who is ill and fears death [as a result of fasting], **(5)** one whose fasting fears might jeopardize the life of a sinless soul (i.e. the pregnant mother whose fast is bound to

jeopardize the life of her unborn child).

3. **The recommended (*Sunnah*) fast** is the supererogatory fast, whether specified (such as the fast of Mondays and Thursdays of every week and the 13th, 14th and 15th of every lunar month), or unspecified which includes general voluntary fasts.
4. **The disliked (*makrooh*) fast** is the fast of an ill person who experiences hardship and difficulty when fasting.
5. **The permissible (*jaa'iz*) *fast*** is the fast of a traveler. It is permissible for him to fast or not fast, especially if he traveled on a day in which he began fasting before traveling.

Sheikh as-Sa'dee
Fataawaa Ramadhan, Volume 1, Pages 34-36, *Fatwa*a No 8
Al-Irshaad ilaa Ma'rifatil Ahkaam, pages 82-84

Establishing the Beginning and End of *Ramadhan* by Sighting the Moon

Q. Is it permissible for a Muslim to rely upon astronomical calculations in order to establish the beginning and end of *Ramadhan* or is it necessary that the new moon be sighted?

A. The Islamic Law (*Sharee'ah*) is a comprehensive and practical law that takes into account the needs of people from all walks of life. Its rulings are suitable for all people regardless of their different levels of knowledge and understanding, whether they are scholars or ignorant, city dwellers or villagers; and it is for this reason that Allah made the means of establishing the timings of various forms of worship very easy for all. He made signs to mark the beginning and end of certain acts of worship so that everyone can participate in doing them. He made, for example, the setting of the sun a sign for the beginning time of the *Maghrib* prayer and for the ending time of the *'Asr* prayer. He made the disappearance of the red horizon a sign for the beginning

time of the *'Ishaa* prayer. He made the sighting of the new moon after it had been hidden towards the end of the previous month a sign for the beginning of the new lunar month and the end of the previous month. He did not burden us by requiring us to establish the beginning of the lunar month by means that only a few people know, namely astronomical knowledge. In this manner, the textual evidence from the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* make the sighting of the new moon of *Ramadhan* a sign for Muslims to begin fasting and the sighting of the new moon of *Shawwaal* a sign to stop fasting. The situation is also the same when establishing the *'Eed* of Sacrifice (10th *Dhul-Hijjah*) and the day of *'Arafah* (9th *Dhul-Hijjah*). Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, said, **"So whoever of you sights [the crescent on the first night] of the month [of *Ramadhan* (i.e. present at his home)], he must fast that month."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:185). He also said, **"They ask you about the new moons. Say they are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the pilgrimage."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:189) The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, also said in this connection, **"Fast when you see it (the new moon of *Ramadhan*), and break your fast when you see it (the new moon of *Shawaal*); and if the sky is cloudy [and you cannot see it], then calculate thirty days [for the month of *Ramadhan*]."** (Al-Bukhaaree) The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, also ordained that fasting start by confirming the sighting of the new moon of *Ramadhan* and the end of the month of fasting by confirming the sighting of the new moon of *Shawwaal*. He did not link any of that to astronomical calculations or to the movement of stars. People acted in accordance with this at the time of the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and at the time of the rightly-guided caliphs and the early three generations to whose superiority, excellence and virtue the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, testified. Relying on astronomical knowledge alone to ascertain the beginning and the end of the lunar months and determining the beginning and the end of the month of fasting and similar other acts of worship without the actual physical sighting of the moon is [undoubtedly] an innovation in religion that has no good in it

or any basis whatsoever in the religion. All good lies in following in the footsteps of the righteous predecessors with regard to religious matters, and all evil lies in the practicing the innovations that have crept into the religion. We ask Allah to protect us as well as all Muslims from all trials and tribulations, open or hidden. We pray to Allah to grant us success and to send His peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and his companions.
The Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fataawaa

When to Intend Fasting

Q. On the first night of *Ramadhan* (i.e. the night before the first day of *Ramadhan*), a person went to bed before knowing that the next day was going to be the first day of fasting. When he woke up [and went out to the mosque] for the *Fajr* prayer, he asked one of the worshippers [as to when *Ramadhan* would start,] but the latter himself did not know either. Being uncertain, this man continued as he was and did not eat [or drink] anything. When he got to work, he found that people there were fasting. Only then did he realize that the month of fasting had begun. Therefore, he decided to continue in this state and fasted until the evening. Was his fast correct on that day or is he required to make up for it? We request you to give us a *fatwaa* on this matter, and we pray to Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, to reward you abundantly.

A. If a person is not aware or certain of the beginning of *Ramadhan* during the [first] day, he is legally obliged to abstain [from anything that breaks the fast, namely food, drink and sexual intercourse] for the rest of that day, then make up for that day later on because he did not make the intention to fast the previous night. Many *ahaadeeth* affirm that there is no fast for someone who did not make the intention on the night before the fast of *Ramadhan*. Therefore, this person must make up for this day because

part of it had passed and he had not made the intention to fast the previous night.
Sheikh Saaleh Al-Fawzaan

The Intention to Fast in *Ramadhan*

Q. Is it obligatory for someone who is fasting, upon making the intention to fast in *Ramadhan*, to specify that such a fast is obligatory?

A. It is sufficient for such a person to make the intention that it is the fast of *Ramadhan* and not to say, [as many ignorant people do,] "I intend to begin an obligatory [fast]", since it is understood that the fast of *Ramadhan* is obligatory.
Sheikh Ibn Jibreen

NOTE: The person who is fasting *Ramadhan* does not need to repeat the intention every night during *Ramadhan*; it is sufficient to have the intention at the beginning of the month. If the intention is interrupted by breaking the fast due to travel or sickness, for example, he has to renew the intention to fast when the reason for breaking the fast is no longer present.

The Place of the Intention

Q. What is the ruling on vocalizing the intention to fast, [by saying, for instance,] "O Allah, I have made the intention to fast"?

A. The place of the intention is the heart, and it is not permissible to vocalize the intention, either for the prayer, the fast, *wudhoo* (ablution), or any other act of worship.
Sheikh Ibn Jibreen

Ramadhan Greetings

Q. Is it *bid'ah* (innovation in religion) to greet one another in *Ramadhan* by using such greetings as '*Ramadhan Mubaarak*' or '*Ramadhan Kareem*'?

A. In The Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger.
Dear questioner,

Thanks for your question, and we pray to Allah to guide you to all that is best for you, both in this world and in the Hereafter. Amen. There is nothing wrong with wishing one another well at the beginning of, or during the month of *Ramadhan* by saying '*Ramadhan Mubaarak*' or '*Ramadhan Kareem*,' as such greetings form part of people's customs, for permissibility is the original rule governing such things. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, would give his Companions the good news of the arrival of the month of *Ramadhan*, and he would urge them to make the most of it. Abu Hurairah, *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, narrated that Allah's Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, "There has come to you *Ramadhan*, a blessed month. Allah has made it obligatory on you to fast (this month). During it, the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hell are locked, and the devils are chained up. In it there is a night that is better than a thousand months, and whoever is deprived of its goodness is deprived indeed.' (An-Nasaa'ee, 4/129; *Saheeh at-Targheeb*, 1/490)" Therefore, congratulating one another on the arrival of *Ramadhan* is not considered a *bid'ah* because doing so is part of the customs of people, and the act itself is based on the original rule of permissibility.
Sheikh Muhammad Saaleh Al-Munajjid

Hesitation whether to fast or not

Q. We heard the cannons tonight, (in Saudi Arabia, the cannons indicate the beginning and ending of *Ramadhan*) more than once, and we were not certain whether it was *'Eed* or still *Ramadhan*. Therefore, we waited until we could hear something from the *imam* before the *Fajr* prayer, but we did not hear anything. What is the ruling regarding hesitation whether to fast or not?

A. It is obligatory upon a person in such a situation to verify matters to achieve certainty. It is worth mentioning that the basic principle in such a situation is that matters remain as they are until proven otherwise. If the month had ended it would have been clear so that people would know and not take *sahoor* and fast. In any case, this day is to be considered as a day of *Ramadhan;* and if the end of the month had been established, the matter would have been clear. Therefore, based upon this, it is obligatory upon the person to fast in such a situation without hesitation because the basic principle [in this case] is that *Ramadhan* is not over yet [until its end is confirmed and established beyond any doubt]. If it becomes clear later on, however, that this day is actually the day of the *'Eed*, then this person should break his fast [to celebrate the *'Eed*].
Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

Social Benefits of Fasting

Q. Does fasting have any social benefits?

A. Yes, it does. Among these is that people feel that they are one single nation, eating at the same time and fasting at the same time. The wealthy become more aware of Allah's blessings and are thus more sympathetic to the poor. Fasting weakens the devil's evil effect on people. It produces fear of Allah, which, in its turn, strengthens the [social] bonds between members of the Muslim community.
Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

Virtues of Feeding a Fasting Person

Q. Some people hold banquets in *Ramadhan* and invite other people to them. Others slaughter animals and distribute their meat in charity. What is the ruling regarding this?

A. Offering food in *Ramadhan* has further virtues due to this special and venerable occasion as well as the need that the fasting people have for food. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Whoever gives food to a fasting person with which to break his fast will have a reward equal to his, without it detracting in the slightest from the reward of the fasting person."** (*At-Tirmidhee: Saheeh*) So preparing food in this month for the needy is one of the best actions, and the reward for giving charity in the month of *Ramadhan* is multiplied more than in the other months.
Sheikh Saaleh Al Fawzaan

Neglecting the Obligatory Fast

Q. What is the ruling regarding a Muslim who neglected to fast without a valid reason for a number of years while he was fulfilling the other obligations? Does he have to make up for them or just make expiation? How should he make up for these months if he has to?

A. A person, whether male or female, who neglects to fast in *Ramadhan* whilst he is able to do so has in fact disobeyed Allah and His Messenger and has committed a major sin. He has to repent to Allah and make up for all the fasts he missed. He must also feed a poor person for each day he missed if he is able to do so. If he is a poor person himself and cannot afford to do so, then it is enough for him to make up for the days he missed and sincerely repent to Allah. This is because fasting in *Ramadhan* is a great obligation which Allah prescribed for all Muslims. Allah's Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, mentioned that it is one of the five pillars of *Islam*. If this person denies the obligation of

fasting *Ramadhan* then he is, by virtue of this deed, a disbeliever. He must be asked by those in authority to repent through the Islamic courts. If he refuses to repent it is obligatory to kill him due to his apostasy, As the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"...Whoever changes his religion [from *Islam*] then kill him."** (Al-Bukhaaree) However, if he did not fast due to illness or travel there is no sin upon him. It is obligatory upon him in this case, however, to make up for the days he did not fast once he has recovered from his illness or returned from his journey. Allah says, **"But whoever is sick or is on a journey shall fast the same number of days [he has missed]."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:185)
Sheikh Ibn Baaz

Leaving off Fasting due to Laziness

Q. Is a person who leaves off fasting due to laziness like the one that leaves off prayer in the respect that he is also a disbeliever (*kaafir*)?

A. The person who leaves off fasting due to laziness is not a disbeliever because the basic rule is that a person remains a Muslim until sufficient evidence as to the fact that he left the fold of Islam is established. There is no evidence that the person who leaves off fasting is outside the fold of Islam if he neglects it due to laziness and heedlessness. This is not the same as prayer because textual evidence from the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, as well as the sayings of the companions, indicates that the person that leaves off the obligatory prayers out of heedlessness and laziness is a disbeliever (*kaafir*). 'Abdullaah ibn Shaqeeq said, "The companions of Allah's Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, did not consider as disbelief the leaving off of any actions except the [obligatory] prayers." It is obligatory to ask this person who neglects fasting due to laziness and heedlessness to observe fast. If he refuses, he should be punished until he starts observing the fast.
Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

Observing the Fast without Taking the *Sahoor*

Q. A person went to sleep before the *sahoor* (pre-dawn meal) in *Ramadhan* whilst having the intention to take it, but he slept through until the morning. Is his fast correct or not?

A. His fast is correct because the *sahoor* is not a condition for the correctness of the fast. However, it is better to take the *sahoor*, as the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Take the *sahoor* meal, for there is a blessing in it."** (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)
Sheikh Ibn Baaz

The Best Food Items with which to Break the Fast

Q. What are the best food items with which the fasting person can break his fast?

A. The best food items with which to break the fast are fresh dates; if these are not available, then dry dates; and if these are [also] unavailable, then the fast should be broken with water. Anas *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, related that the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, used to break his fast with fresh dates before praying; if fresh dates were not available, he would eat dried dates; if dried dates were not available, he would have a few sips of water. (Al-Tirmidhee) However, if none of these is available to a fasting person, then it is permissible for him [to break his fast] with any permissible food items. Still, if nothing is available to him, then he should simply make the intention to break the fast.
Sheikh Ibn Jibreen

The Reward for Breaking the Fast with Dates

Q. Is there any reward for [breaking the fast with] these food items?

A. The person who follows the Prophet's example and breaks his fast with dates will obtain the reward for following his example. Even with regard to [mundane] but permissible (*mubaah*) matters, if he follows his example, he will certainly be rewarded for that action. It is for this reason that Muslim scholars say, "The good intention turns good habits into acts of worship."
Sheikh Ibn Jibreen

Breaking the fast with Water

Q. If a person is on a journey to another country while fasting during *Ramadhan* and he does not have anything except water, what should he do?

A. If a person is fasting and the sun sets and he does not find anything to break his fast with except water, then he should break his fast with water, for even though fresh or dried dates are the best food items with which to break the fast it is not obligatory to do so. We pray to Allah to grant us success and to send His peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and his companions.
The Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fataawaa

Eating after the *Adhaan* for a Supererogatory Fast

Q. If I wanted to fast but was unable to wake up before the *adhaan* of the *Fajr* prayer, is it permissible for me to eat after the *adhaan*, given that this is a supererogatory fast?

A. If the situation is as you have stated, then do not eat or

drink after the *adhaan* of the *Fajr* prayer so long as you wish to fast, even if the fast is a supererogatory one. If you eat [or drink] after the *adhaan* has been called, your fast will be invalid.
The Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fataawaa

Perform *Ghusl* or take *Sahoor?*

Q. If the time for *Fajr* is approaching in *Ramadhan* and I need to take *ghusl* [as a result of a wet dream or sexual intercourse] but there is not enough time to perform it and take the *sahoor*, should I perform the *ghusl* and miss the *sahoor* or should I take the *sahoor* and delay the *ghusl* until after *Fajr*?

A. It is better to take the *sahoor* because the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Take the *sahoor*, for there is a blessing in it."** (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) You can delay the *ghusl* because one has enough time between the *adhaan* and the *iqaamah* to perform it. Therefore, if *Fajr* has arrived while you have not performed *ghusl* yet, then perform it and offer the prayers and your fast will not be affected. Al-Bukaaree reported that 'A'ishah, *radiyallaahu 'anhaa*, said **"Sometimes Allah's Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, would be in a state of *janaabah* from sexual intercourse, not because of a wet dream, then he would take *ghusl* (a bath) and continue his fast."**
Sheikh Ibn Jibreen

Fasting in Countries Where the Sun Sets Late

Q. We live in a country where the sun does not set until 09:30 p.m. or 10:00 p.m. When should we break our fast?

A. Break your fast when the sun has set. So long as you have a night and a day in 24 hours, it is obligatory that you fast even if the day is long.
Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

Forgetfully Eating whilst Fasting

Q. I was fasting one day when I forgetfully ate something. [When I realized,] I maintained the fast until the evening. Is there any sin upon me?

A. If a person forgetfully eats or drinks whilst fasting, he should complete his fast for, surely, it is Allah who has fed him and given him to drink, as has been mentioned in the authentic *hadeeth* [reported by Al-Bukhaaree]. Allah forgives all mistakes as well as acts done out of forgetfulness and does not take anyone to account until they have done an act intentionally.
Sheikh Ibn Jibreen

Giving Food and Drink to a Fasting person

Q. Last *Ramadhan*, my husband returned home from work and asked me to bring him a glass of water but I did not remind him that he was fasting. I looked at him to see if he was fasting or not, and it became clear that he had indeed forgotten that he was fasting. So, I proceeded to bring him a glass of water to drink. After drinking the water, he remembered that he was fasting and admonished me for not reminding him. I was conscious-stricken and I felt afraid of the consequences of this action in the Hereafter. Please inform me if I was sinful. I pray to Allah to reward you.

A. Yes, you did commit a sin for bringing your husband a glass of water when you knew he was fasting. In fact, you should have reminded him about the fast when he asked you for water. Your husband's fast for that day is valid provided he drank out of forgetfulness.
The Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fataawaa

The Fast of Minors

Q. What is the ruling of the fast of a young child who has not attained puberty yet?

A. Minors are not required to fast. However, the person who is in charge of them are required to encourage them to fast and thereby prepare them for it. It is worth mentioning that the fast of minors is regarded as a supererogatory act in that they will be reward for fasting; however, there is no sin upon them if they fail to complete the fast.
Sheikh Ibn al-'Uthaymeen

Breaking the fast on a Journey

Q. What type of journey on which breaking the fast is permissible?

A. The distance of the journey for which it is permissible to shorten the obligatory prayers and to break the fast is approximately 83 kilometers. Some scholars, however, do not specify a distance for the journey. They maintain that whatever is commonly understood as a journey amongst people constitutes a journey in Islam. The Messenger of Allah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, used to shorten the prayers if he traveled 3 *faraasikh* (which is equal to 9 miles). If the journey is undertaken for impermissible purposes, then shortening the prayers and breaking the fast are not allowed because any journey that is undertaken for evil purposes doe not deserve [such a] concession. Some Muslim scholars, however, do not differentiate between a journey undertaken for an evil purpose and one undertaken for a permissible purpose because of the generality of the evidence surrounding the issue. Allah knows best.
Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

Sexual Intercourse for the Traveler

Q. Is it permissible for the traveler to have sexual intercourse with his wife during the day of *Ramadhan*?

A. In the Name of Allah, and all praise is for Allah. If he is a traveler or is suffering from an illness that allows him to break his fast, there is no harm for him to do so and no expiation is required of him. However, he must make up for the missed day on which he had sexual intercourse with his wife. The reason for this is that the traveler and the person who is ill [and cannot fast] are allowed to break the fast and thus engage in sexual intercourse. Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, says, **"[Fasting] is for a fixed number of days, but if any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number [should be made up] from days later. As for those who can fast with difficulty, they have [a choice either to fast or] feed a poor person [for every day], but whoever does good of his own accord, it is better for him. And that you fast is better for you if only you knew."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:184). The same ruling applies to a woman who is on a journey or is suffering from an illness that makes it too difficult for her to fast.
Sheikh Ibn Baaz

Wet Dreams in *Ramadhan*

Q. If a person has a wet dream during the day in *Ramadhan*, does this nullify his fast or not? Should he perform the ritual purification [of *ghusl*]?

A. If someone has a wet dream during the day in *Ramadhan*, his fast is sound and is not affected by the wet dream because he has not done so intentionally. However, he has to perform the ritual purification, or *ghusl*, so he can perform the prayers. Allah knows best.
Sheikh Saaleh Al-Fawzaan

Fondling One's Wife whilst Fasting

Q. Is it permissible for a fasting person to kiss his wife and fondle her during the day of *Ramadhan*?

A. Yes, it is permissible for him to kiss his wife and fondle her during the day in *Ramadhan*. However, if he happens to ejaculate [without having intercourse], his fast becomes invalid. If this occurs during the day in *Ramadhan*, he has to abstain [from all that which nullifies the fast] for the rest of the day and has to make up for that day. If this occurs in other than *Ramadhan*, his fast also becomes invalid but he does not have to abstain. If the fast is obligatory, then he has to make up for that day. If, however, the fast is only supererogatory (*naafilah*), he does not have to make up for it.
Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

Ejaculation during Foreplay whilst Fasting

Q. If a man ejaculates during foreplay with his wife during the day in *Ramadhan*, without there being any contact between their private parts, what should he do?

A. In this case the fast for that day becomes invalid and thus he is required to make up for that day; no expiation is necessary as this is only required in the case of the actual sexual intercourse.
Sheikh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem Aal-ash-Sheikh

Bleeding whilst Fasting

Q. What is the ruling of someone who bleeds whilst fasting?

A. If this bleeding is unintentional, his fast is valid.
The Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fataawaa

Nosebleeds

Q. I was fasting in *Ramadhan* and when I touched my nose, some drops of blood flowed out without intention. Does this affect my fast? Do I have to make up for it?

A. If the situation is as you have stated, then your fast is valid. If a person suffers from a nosebleed, his fast is still valid, because this is something that is beyond his control. Therefore, your fast is valid and there is no need for you to make up for it.
The Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fataawaa

Having a Blood Test whilst Fasting

Q. What is the ruling regarding someone who has some of his blood drawn out of his right arm for analysis purposes whilst fasting during the day in *Ramadhan*?

A. Having a blood sample for analysis taken does not break the fast and is permissible because it is something that is needed.
Sheikh Ibn Baaz

Donating Blood

Q. Does donating blood during the day in *Ramadhan* render fasting null? Also, is it permissible?

A. Donating a generous amount of blood during the fasting hours of day renders fasting null. This is treated the same as cupping (*hijaamah*: an obsolete practice of lighting a flame of paper under a suction cup, then make a small cut on the skin of the back in order to relieve some blood and body pain). However, if the extracted amount of blood is insignificant, e.g. for blood testing purposes, it will not nullify the fast.
Sheikh Ibn Jibreen

Cupping

Q. Is the fast of the cupper and the cupped broken during the day in *Ramadhan*?

A. The fast of the cupper and the cupped is broken and they must refrain from all that which breaks the fast and make up for this fast. The Prophet said, **"The cupper and the cupped break their fast [on practicing this operation while fasting]."** (Al-Bukhaaree)
The Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fataawaa

Blood Flowing out whilst Fasting

Q. With respect to blood flowing out, what are the situations in which this nullifies the fast?

A. The fast is not nullified by the flowing out of blood except in the case of cupping. Some scholars, however, maintain that the fast is not nullified even by cupping. Nonetheless, the consensus is that cupping does nullify the fast.
Sheikh Ibn Baaz

Vomiting

Q. What is the ruling of someone who vomits whilst fasting? Does he have to make up for his fast or not?
A. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Whoever vomits unintentionally does not have to make up for the fast later on, but whoever vomits on purpose does have to make up for the fast."** (*Saheeh* At-Tirmidhee) A person who vomits deliberately, by sticking his finger down his throat or applying pressure to his stomach, or deliberately smelling a repulsive odor, or looking at something that could make him vomit, is obliged to make up for the fast later on. If

he feels that he is about to vomit, but then it subsides by itself, this does not break his fast because it is not something that he can control. However, if the vomit comes into his mouth and he swallows it back down, this does break the fast. If a person feels sick in his stomach, he does not have to suppress the urge to vomit, because this could cause him harm.
Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

Having Injections

Q. I had an intravenous injection during the day in *Ramadhan*. Do I have to make up for this day?

A. Injections of nourishing substances (i.e. they have food value and are thus used as food or drink substitutes) do break the fast, whether they are intravenous or otherwise. If, however, they serve as a tranquilizer or an analgesic for pain or something similar to it, then this does not nullify the fast.
Sheikh Ibn Jibreen

Note: Injections that are not given to replace food and drink but are used to administer medications such as penicillin and insulin, or tonics, or vaccinations, do not break the fast, regardless of whether they are intra-muscular or intravenous. (*Fataawa Ibn Ibraaheem*, 4/189).

Kidney Dialysis

Q. Does Kidney dialysis break the fast?

A. Kidney dialysis, whereby the blood is taken out, cleaned, and put back with some chemicals or nourishing substances such as sugars and salts added, is considered to break the fast.
The Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fataawaa

Using the *Siwaak*

Q. What is the ruling of using a *siwaak* (tooth stick) while fasting after *zawaal* (when the sun is at its highest point and there is no shadow)?

A. Using the *siwaak* before or after *zawaal* is a recommended practice, just as it is a *Sunnah* at other than these times. The reason for this is that the *hadeeth* regarding using the *siwaak* is a general one. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"[Using] the *siwaak* purifies the mouth [and] is pleasing to the Lord."** (Al-Bukhaaree) He also said, **"Were it not that I might overburden my followers, I would have ordered them to use the *siwaak* at the time of every prayer."** (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)
Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

Using *siwaak* is *Sunnah* for the fasting person at all times of the day, even if it is wet. If a fasting person uses a *siwaak* and detects some heat or other taste from it and swallows it, or if he takes the *siwaak* out of his mouth and sees saliva on it then puts it back in his mouth and swallows the saliva, this does not break his fast.
Al-Fataawaa as-Sa'diyyah

Using Toothpaste

Q. Is it permissible to brush the teeth using a toothbrush after dawn is declared? If so, what is the ruling on bleeding while brushing the teeth? Does it break the fast?

A. It is permissible to rinse the mouth and use *siwaak*, wooden brush or other brushes. Some scholars dislike using *siwaak* in the afternoon due to the fact that this will freshen the mouth. Thus, using the toothpaste and toothbrush becomes more disliked on this analogy. Moreover, toothpaste has a flavoring taste that will be felt during brushing, and the

user might swallow a very little amount during the brushing process or may not. Therefore, it is highly recommended to use toothpaste and toothbrush after finishing the *sahoor* meal, before declaring the beginning of fast. However, careful use of toothpaste and brush is permissible during the fasting hours of the day. Minor gum bleeding does not render fasting null. Allah the Almighty knows best.
Sheikh Ibn Jibreen

Wearing Perfumes

Q. What is the verdict concerning the use of oil perfumes during the day of fasting *Ramadhan*?

A. It is allowed to wear perfume while fasting as long as one does not inhale the smoke if it is burned incense.
Sheikh Mohammed ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen

Using Mouth Fresheners

Q. Pharmacies sell mouth fresheners in small atomizers. Is it permissible to use them during the day in *Ramadhan* to get rid of the smell of the mouth?

A. The *siwaak* suffices for this purpose and that is exactly what the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, recommended for freshening the mouth whilst fasting. There is no problem in using the atomizer as long as nothing reaches the throat. However, it is not befitting for a Muslim to dislike the odor [of the mouth] that results from fasting, since it is a sign of obedience to Allah and is pleasing to Him. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, "**The odor coming from the mouth of a fasting person is better with Allah than the fragrance of musk.**" (Muslim)
Sheikh Saaleh Al-Fawzaan

Eye Drops and Eye Ointment

Q. What is the ruling on the use of kohl, eye drops and ointment?

A. There is no harm for a fasting person to apply kohl to his eyes. He can also apply eye drops and eardrops, for that matter, even if he finds the taste of them in his throat. This does not nullify his fast because these are neither food nor drink. The prohibition in the [textual] evidence covers eating and drinking, and thus whatever is not considered as food and drink cannot be regarded as something that is bound to break the fast. This is the opinion of Sheikh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, and it is correct.
Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

Being Abusive whilst Fasting

Q. Some drivers use foul and abusive language toward others while on the road, especially when the traffic is heavy. What is the ruling concerning their fast?

A. As for their fast, it is correct, as the impermissible statements and actions do not invalidate the fast. However, [behaving in such a manner] undoubtedly reduces the reward of fasting and deprives one of its real benefits. The prime objective of fasting, as the Qur'an clearly states, is to attain *taqwaa* (piety). Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, says, **"O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you that you may attain piety."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:183). [In this verse,] Allah explains that the wisdom behind the obligation of fasting upon us is to attain piety. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, also said in this connection, **"Whoever does not abandon false speech and acting upon it, Allah cares not about his leaving off eating and drinking."** (Al-Bukhaaree) He also commanded the fasting person, who is reviled or being drawn into a quarrel, to say "I am fasting" in order to

deter those who are swearing and being abusive. They will realize that he does not wish to retaliate [or be involved in a quarrel], not out of cowardice on his part, but rather out of piety and fear of Allah because he is fasting. The fasting person is commanded to observe patience regardless of how he feels inside. Abu Hurairah narrated that a man requested the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, to counsel him and he replied, **"Do not become angry."** The man repeated his request several times, and he, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, replied, **"Do not become angry."** (Al-Bukhaaree) Many people sometimes feel remorse for saying or doing something in a fit of anger and later wish that they had not done so. However, it is not always possible to repair [the damage one has done].
Sheikh Saaleh Al-Fawzaan

Backbiting and Slandering

Q. Does backbiting and slandering during the day in *Ramadhan* nullify the fast?

A. Backbiting and slandering do not nullify the fast. However, they reduce the reward of the fast. Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, says, **"O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you that you may attain piety."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:183). The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, also said, **"Whoever does not abandon false speech and acting upon it, Allah cares not about his leaving off eating and drinking."** (Al-Bukhaaree)
Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

Bad speech during the month of *Ramadhan*

Q. Does the impermissible (*haraam*) speech during the day in *Ramadhan* nullify the fast?

A. If we read Allah's statement, **"O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you that you may attain piety."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:183), we find that the wisdom behind the obligation of fasting is to attain piety (*taqwaa*) and [establish] the worship of Allah. *Taqwaa* [can be realized by] abandoning all that is forbidden, obeying all that is commanded and avoiding all that is warned against. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Whoever does not abandon false speech and acting upon it, Allah cares not about his leaving off eating and drinking."** Therefore, the fasting person is expected to abandon all forbidden words and deeds, including backbiting, lying, slandering and forbidden transactions. If he does his best to keep away from the prohibited actions during the month [of *Ramadhan*], he will certainly find himself observing uprightness for the rest of the year. Deplorably enough, it has become part of the daily practice of many people to indulge in impermissible speech whether they are observing the fast or not. Although these bad actions do not nullify the fast, they do reduce the reward and, possibly, wipe out the reward for the fast altogether. We seek Allah's Assistance.
Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

Sleeping throughout the Day

Q. During *Ramadhan*, if someone takes the pre-dawn meal (*sahoor*), offers the *Fajr* prayer, goes to sleep until noon, then offers the *Dhuhr* prayer, goes to sleep again until *'Asr*, offers the *'Asr* prayers and, again, goes to sleep until the time of breaking the fast (at *Maghrib*), would his fast be correct?

A. If the situation is as mentioned, his fast is correct. However, continuing in this fashion throughout the day (i.e. sleeping) is a waste [of precious time] and neglect on his part, for the month of *Ramadhan* is a blessed month [and we are expected to make the most of it]. A Muslim should always do his best to benefit from whatever will assist him [to increase his faith] by doing such things as reciting the Qur'an

frequently, engaging in decent work to earn a living and seeking knowledge. We pray to Allah to grant us success and to send His peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and his companions.
The Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fataawaa

Intentionally Swallowing Water while Bathing

Q. A man who was fasting happened to swallow some water while taking a bath due to the strong pressure of the water. Does he have to make up for this fast?

A. He does not have to make up for this fast if he did not do so intentionally. His case is similar to that of someone who has forgotten.
Sheikh Ibn Baaz

Tasting Food

Q. Is it permissible for a cook to taste the food whilst fasting?

A. There is no harm in tasting food, if necessary. This can be done by placing it on the tip of the tongue to see how sweet or sour it is. However, none of it should be swallowed; rather, it should be spat out or taken out of the mouth. If the food is tasted in this manner, the fast stands valid. Allah knows best.
Sheikh Ibn Jibreen

Pregnant Women and Fasting

Q. In the year 1409 AH (1988), my wife did not fast for fourteen days due to her menses. Afterwards, she was able to make up for only seven days. Now, she is six months pregnant. Is it enough to make expiation for the remaining days [she has to make up for]? What should she do?

A. Your wife must make up for the days left from the *Ramadhan* in which she did not fast due to her menses. If she delayed making up for these days until the arrival of the next *Ramadhan* without a valid reason, then she has to make up for these days along with making expiation for each of the days left. Expiation can be made by feeding a poor person for each day [she missed] half a measure of dates, barley or that which is similar to this from the staple food of the people or else, a number of poor people according to the days left to make up. However, if the delay was due to pregnancy or an illness, then she is only required to make up for the days she missed. We pray to Allah to grant us success and to send His peace and blessings upon our Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, his family and his companions.
The Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fataawaa

Inability to Fast due to Illness

Q. A man went through a chronic illness for four years, and the doctors advised him not to fast. Now that Allah has cured him, should he make up for the four months of *Ramadhan* he missed?

A. If a person is unable to fast due to an illness, he must make up for the days he missed when he recovers from his illness. Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, says, **[Fasting] is for a fixed number of days, but if any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number [should be made up] from days later.** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:184). For a person who has not fasted for four consecutive *Ramadhan*s and has now recovered from his illness, he has to make up for the fasts missed [in order]. However, he should space out the days from each other, according to his ability to [make up for the] fast, until he makes up for all the fasts in order to relieves himself of the responsibility. It is not obligatory for him to make up for the all the days [he missed] at once, as Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, says, **"So keep your duty to**

Allah and fear Him as much as you can; listen and obey and spend in charity for the benefit of your souls. And those saved from the covetousness of their own soul, they are the successful ones." (*Surah at-Taghaabun*, 64:16).
Sheikh Saaleh Al-Fawzaan

Having Sexual Intercourse with One's Wife without Knowing it was the First Day of *Ramadhan*

Q. I had sexual intercourse with my wife during the day in *Ramadhan*. I was not aware that it was the first day of *Ramadhan*, nor did many other people until after the *'Asr* prayer. Do I have to make expiation now?

A. There is nothing required of you except to make up for the fast [of the day on which you had sexual intercourse], and there is no expiation to make, for you did not know that it was the first day of *Ramadhan*, and thus you did not violate the sanctity of the day of *Ramadhan* intentionally.
Sheikh Ibn Jibreen

The *Taraaweeh* Prayers

Q. Does one have to offer the *Taraaweeh* prayers during the whole month of *Ramadhan*?

A. No, one does not have to do so because the *Taraaweeh* prayers represent a recommended act, and therefore if one offers them, one will be rewarded; and if one does not offer them, one is not considered sinful. However, [It is better to offer them] as missing out on them will cause one to miss out on a great deal of good, as we have mentioned [before].
Sheikh Ibn Uthaymeen

Imams Prolonging *Qunoot* Supplications

Q. Some mosque *imams* prolong their [*qunoot*] supplications in *Ramadhan*, while some of them shorten them. What is the correct practice in this regard?

A. The correct practice is to make them neither too long, nor too short. Making supplications inconveniently long for the worshippers is not allowed. When news reached the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, that Mu'aadh Ibn Jabal, *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, had one night led people in prayer and made his prayer very long, he became angry like never before and said to him, **"Are you putting people to trial, Mu'aadh?"** Therefore, the *imam* is recommended to shorten the supplications, as prolonging them is bound to exhaust the people [participating in the congregation] especially the weak amongst them. Amongst the worshippers are [also] those who do not wish to leave until after the *imam* has completed all the *Taraaweeh* prayers [to obtain the reward for staying until the *imam* has completed the prayers], and so it becomes difficult for them to remain behind with the *imam* [when he prolongs the supplications]. Therefore, my advice to the *imams* is to follow a middle course in this regard. It is also advisable to leave off the supplications sometimes so that people do not get the impression that the supplications are obligatory.
Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

Dying before Being Able to Make up for the Fast

Q. What is the ruling of someone who has died when he still has to make up for the days he missed from *Ramadhan*?

A. If he has died while he still has to make up for days he missed from *Ramadhan*, then person who is in charge of his affairs from amongst his close relatives or inheritors should fast on his behalf. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Whoever died whilst having days to make up from *Ramadhan*, his guardian must fast on his behalf."** (Al-

Bukhaaree) If the person in charge of his affairs does not fast on his behalf, then he must feed a poor person for each day [the deceased person missed from *Ramadhan*].
Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

Voluntary Fasts for Women

Q. Why are women not allowed to observe a voluntary fast without their husbands' permission even though that is an act of worship, and there should be no obedience to any created being if this involves disobedience of the Creator?

A. Abu Hurairah narrated that Allah's Messenger, *sallallaahu a'layhi wa sallam*, said, **"No woman should fast when her husband is present except with his permission."** (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) Commenting on this *hadeeth*, *al-Haafidh* Ibn Hajar said, "That is when he is present and is not traveling." The Prophet's statement "except with his permission" refers to a fast other than that of *Ramadhan*, and other obligatory fasts apart from that of *Ramadhan*. This *hadeeth* indicates that it is impermissible for a woman to observe a voluntary fast without her husband's permission. This is the opinion of the majority of scholars. This *hadeeth* also indicates that the wife's fulfillment of the husband's right takes precedence over her performance of voluntary good deeds, because his right is an obligation, and obligations are to be given priority over voluntary deeds. *Imam* An-Nawawee said, "This *hadeeth* refers to voluntary and recommended fasts which are not confined to a specific time. The reason for this is that the husband has the right to have sexual intercourse with his wife on all days, and his right must be fulfilled immediately and cannot be delayed because of a voluntary action or an obligatory action that could be done later. If it is argued that he should let her fast without his permission, then if he wants to have intercourse with her, he can do so and she can break her fast at that time. The answer is that if she fasts, that will most likely prevent him from having sexual intercourse with her, because he would not want to spoil her fast." The questioner is right in saying

that observing a voluntary fast is an act of worship, and that there should be no obedience to any created being if this involves disobedience of the Creator. However, if a woman does not observe a voluntary fast, that is not an act of disobedience, nor is it a sin. Therefore, this principle is not applicable in this case; rather, what is sinful is not fasting in *Ramadhan*. Hence, a woman should fast *Ramadhan* with or without her husband's permission. Allah Knows Best

Feeding the Poor or Making up for the Missed Fasts

Q. I read that it is permissible for pregnant women and nursing mothers not to fast, that they can feed the poor instead, and that they are not required to make up for the missed days of *Ramadhan*. A tradition narrated on the authority of ibn Umar concerning this was cited as evidence. Is this the correct opinion in this regard?

A. Sheikh Ibn Baaz said in *Majmoo' al-Fataawaa*: "It is said that pregnant and nursing mothers are similar to those who are chronically ill. Thus, the ruling for the sick also applies to them. If it is too difficult for them to fast, then it is prescribed for them not to fast, but they must feed a needy person for each day they have missed, but this is a weak opinion. The correct position is that they have to make up for the missed fasts, just like travelers and those who are temporarily ill, because Allah says, **"[Fasting] is for a fixed number of days, but if any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number [should be made up] from days later."**(*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:184). The narrations of Ibn Abbaas and Ibn Umar which indicate that pregnant women and nursing mothers need only feed the poor and are not required to fast is a weak opinion which clearly contradicts other authentic proofs."
Sheikh Muhammad S. al-Munajjid

Expiation for Having Sexual Intercourse during the Day in *Ramadhan*

Q. During the first *Ramadhan* after my wife and I were married, we did something that we are both deeply ashamed of; namely that we had sexual intercourse while fasting. We have both sincerely repented of this sin. Unfortunately, this occurred twice. I can fast for sixty days, but since fasting should be continuous, I believe that I will not be able to provide for my family, as my job requires physical strength and fasting weakens me. Without sufficient energy, work becomes extremely difficult. What options are available to me? *Al-Hamdulillaah*, even though I am not rich I am not destitute. My wife and I feel tremendous guilt about this matter. Do I need to make expiation for each time we had intercourse?

A. Our advice is that you should try to fast the two consecutive months in winter, when the days become shorter and cooler, in order to make it less difficult for you. Alternatively, you could fast these two months during your annual leave given to you by your employer.

If you find it impossible to fast, then it is permissible for you to feed sixty poor people. You can feed them in stages, according to your means, until you have fed the complete number of the poor. If your wife was a willing partner in the act of intercourse during the day in *Ramadhan*, she has to do the same thing in expiation of such a sin. If each act of sexual intercourse occurred on different days, then you have to expiate for each day on which the sanctity of the sacred month was violated. The author of *Kifaayat-ut-Taalib* says, "The number of expiations corresponds to the number of days, not to the number of times the act was repeated on one particular day. This point should be considered before any expiation can be carried out. There is consensus among the scholars regarding this matter." The author of *Haashiyat-ud-Dasooqi* writes, "It is not counted by the number of times a person has eaten or has had intercourse on one particular day." The author of *Mughnee al-Muhtaaj* writes, "Expiation is

counted by the number of misdeeds (that is, the number of days violated) because each day of fasting is a separate, independent act of worship, so expiation for both [violations from two days] cannot be combined. Thus, whoever has had intercourse on two different days must do penance for such sins twice. If the act of intercourse happens several times during one day, these separate acts are not counted (that is, expiation is sufficient only once)." Allah does not burden anyone beyond his capacity. Allah knows best.
Sheikh Muhammad S. al-Munajjid

Q. Does a woman have to make up for the fasts that she missed during *Ramadhan* even without their husbands' knowledge?

A. Women have to make up for the fasts that they miss during *Ramadhan* even without their husbands' knowledge. It is not a condition for an obligatory fast for a woman to have the permission of her husband. If a woman starts to observe an obligatory fast, she is not allowed to break it except for a legitimate reason. Her husband is not permitted to order her to break her fast when she is making up for a day that she has missed; he is not allowed to have intercourse with her when she is making up for a missed fast, and she is not allowed to obey him in that regard.
The Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fataawaa

Failure to Make up for Days from the Previous *Ramadhan*

Q. What is the ruling concerning a person who missed a few days from the previous *Ramadhan* but did not make up for them until the following *Ramadhan came*? Is he considered a sinner? Does he have to make expiation or not?

A. If someone still has days to make up for from the previous *Ramadhan*, he has to make up for them before [the arrival of]

the next *Ramadhan*. It is permissible for him to delay his fast until *Sha'baan* (the 8th Hegira month, just before *Ramadhan*). However, if the following *Ramadhan* arrives and he still has not made up for the missed days without a valid reason, then he has committed a sin. In that case he is required to make up for those days as well as feed a poor person for each day he missed, for this is the verdict issued of a number of companions of the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*. The amount of food required for each day would be half a *saa'* of the staple food of the country which can be given to a number of people or to just one person. As for the person who has a valid excuse for failing to make up for the fasts, because of illness or travel, he is only required to make up for the days missed before the arrival of the following Ramadhan, and he does not have to feed any needy people. Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, says, **"But whoever is sick or is on a journey shall fast the same number of days [he has missed]."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah,* 2:185) We pray to Allah to grant us success.
Sheikh Ibn Baaz

Ignorant about the Obligation of Fasting

Q. During my first year of puberty I let *Ramadhan* pass by without a valid, Islamic reason, just out of ignorance about its obligation at that time. Do I have to make up for those days I missed and make expiation?

A. You have to make up for the days you missed for that particular month which you did not fast, in addition to making repentance and seeking Allah's forgiveness. In addition, you have to feed a poor person for each day you missed. This will be half a *saa'* of the staple food of the country such as dates or rice, if you are able to do so. However, if you are poor and unable to do so, then nothing is required of you except making up for the days you missed.
Sheikh Ibn Baaz

Failure to Make up for Days Missed in *Ramadhan* throughout her Menstrual Years

Q. A sixty-year old lady was ignorant about the rulings of menstruation for many years. Throughout her menstrual years, she did not make up for the days missed in *Ramadhan*, thinking they did not have to be made up for. What does she have to do?

A. She has to seek repentance from Allah, *Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa*, for the days she had missed because she did not ask Muslim scholars about this matter. In addition, she has to make up for all the missed days and make expiation for each day missed by feeding a poor person half a measure of barley, dates, rice or anything similar to this from the staple food of the country. However, if she is unable to feed the poor, then this is no longer required and she only has to make up for the days she missed. We pray to Allah to grant us success and to send His peace and blessings upon our Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, his family and his companions.

The Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fataawaa

Praying Behind the *Imam* until he Completes the *Taraaweeh* Prayer

Q. Given that the authentic number of *rak'ah* for performing the *Taraaweeh* Prayer is eleven, is it permissible to leave the congregation after the tenth *rak'ah* in a mosque where the *imam* performs twenty-one *rak'ah* for the *Taraaweeh* prayer?

A. It would be better to pray behind the *imam* until he completes the prayer, even if he performs more than eleven *rak'ah*. The additional number of *rak'ah* would be permissible. This is in accordance with the general meaning of the following *hadeeth* narrated by An-Nasaa'ee: **"He who**

continues [in prayer] with the *imam* until he completes *salaat-ul-qiyaam* *(that is the Taraweeh prayer)*, **Allah will record for him [the reward of performing prayer for] the whole night."** He also said, **"*Salaat-ul-layl* (*salaat-ul-qiyaam*) is [to be performed] in pairs (that is two *rak'ah* at a time); and if you are worried about the time of *as-Subh* (that is, if you get carried away in performing *salaat-ul-layl* to the point that it is almost *Fajr* time), then perform *salaat-ul-witr* with one (final) *rak'ah*."** (This *hadeeth* is reported in the seven authentic *hadeeth* books, but this version is that of an-Nasaa'ee). Without doubt, it is better to hold fast to the authentic *Sunnah* of the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and one will certainly gain greater rewards by performing eleven *rak'ah* in the *Taraaweeh* Prayer. In this case, each *rak'ah* would be of a longer duration, thus allowing for better concentration. However, if one were to choose between not praying behind the *imam* after the tenth *rak'ah*—due to the number of *rak'ah* he performs—or continuing with him, then one should decide on the latter choice, as indicated by the previous *hadeeth*. Allah knows best.
Sheikh Muhammad S. al-Munajjid

Blood Spots Appearing prior to Menstruation

Q. Before my menstrual period begins, I spot for about five days. Can I pray and fast? I already know that if I am spotting after my menstrual period then I should pray. So, what is the ruling regarding spotting before the start of the menstrual period?

A. If yellowish or brownish secretions and red blood spots appear regularly before and after your period, then they are considered part of your period, provided that the total amount of time does not exceed fifteen days. Therefore, during this period of time you cannot pray or fast. However, if the discharge appears once again, one or more days after your period has actually ended, it is not considered part of

menstruation. In this case, you can pray and fast, as this is considered as the state of *istihaadhah* rather than menstruation. However, ablution should be performed before each prayer, either after the *adhaan* (call to the prayer) or once the corresponding time for prayer has begun. Allah knows best.
Sheikh Muhammad S. al-Munajjid

I'tikaaf

Q. I heard a *hadeeth* to the effect that *i'tikaaf* is only valid in al-Masjid al-Haraam (in Makkah), al-Masjid an-Nabawee (in Madeenah) and al-Masjid al-Aqsaa (in Jerusalem). Is this *hadeeth* authentic?

A. The *hadeeth* is authentic and is classified as *saheeh* by *Sheikh* al-Albaanee in *Silsilat al-Ahaadeeth as-Saheehah*. With regard to the place where *i'tikaaf* may be observed, the majority of scholars are of the opinion that *i'tikaaf* is not only limited to any one of the three mosques mentioned in the *hadeeth*. To support their view, they cite the *Qur'anic* verse in which Allah says, "**And do not associate with your wives while you are in retreat (i.e. observing *i'tikaaf*) in the mosques.**" (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:187). The word 'mosques' in this verse includes all mosques except those in which *i'tikaaf* is not valid, such as a center in which prayers are not held in congregation (*jamaa'ah*), and if the person who is observing *i'tikaaf* is one of those upon whom prayer in congregation is obligatory. *Sheikh* Ibn 'Uthaymeen was asked about the ruling on *i'tikaaf* in the three mosques mentioned in the *hadeeth*, and he replied, "*I'tikaaf* in mosques other than these three mosques is prescribed at the appropriate time, and *i'tikaaf* is not limited to these three mosques. It may be observed in those mosques as well as in others. This is the view of the leading Muslim scholars such as *Imam* Ahmed, Maalik, ash-Shaafi'ee, Abu Haneefah and others."
Sheikh Muhammad S. al-Munajjid

Conditions of *I'tikaaf*

Q. What are the conditions of *i'tikaaf*? Is fasting one of these conditions? Is it permissible for a person who is observing *i'tikaaf* to visit the sick, answer an invitation, fulfill some of his family's needs and go to work?

A. *I'tikaaf* is to be observed in a mosque where the congregational prayers are established. If the person who is observing *i'tikaaf* is one of those upon whom the Friday prayers are obligatory and the length of his *i'tikaaf* includes a Friday, then it is better to be in a mosque in which the Friday prayers are established. Fasting is not a necessary [part of it]. The *Sunnah* is that he does not visit the sick during his *i'tikaaf* and that he does not answer an invitation, nor fulfills the needs of his family. He should not join a funeral procession and he should not leave the mosque and go out to work. The evidence for this comes from an authentic *hadeeth* related by 'A'ishah, *radiyallaahu 'anhaa*, who said, "The *sunnah* for one who is observing *i'tikaaf* is that he does not visit the sick, nor witness a funeral, nor embrace his wife, nor have intercourse with her, nor leave to fulfill a need except that which is necessary." (Abu Daawood) We pray to Allah to grant us success and to send His peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and his companions.

The Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fataawaa

The End of *I'tikaaf*

Q. When does a person leave *i'tikaaf*? Is it after sunset on the night before the *'Eed* day or after *Fajr* on the *'Eed* day?

A. The person observing *i'tikaaf* leaves *i'tikaaf* once *Ramadhan* ends, and it ends as the sun sets on the night prior to the *'Eed* day. He should also begin the *i'tikaaf* at sunset prior to the 20th day of *Ramadhan*. This is because the last ten nights of *Ramadhan* start from sunset of the night

prior to the 20th day of *Ramadhan* and end at sunset of the night prior to the *'Eed* day.
Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

The Six Days of *Shawwaal*

Q. Is it permissible to fast the six days of *Shawwaal* before making up for days that I missed in *Ramadhan*, if there is not enough time left in the month to do both?

A. Fasting six days of *Shawwaal* is dependent upon having completed the fast of *Ramadhan*, according to the correct view. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Whoever fasts *Ramadhan* and follows it with six days of *Shawwaal*, it will be as if he fasted the whole year."** (Muslim) The conjunction 'and' [in the *hadeeth*] indicates that this must be done in this order. This indicates that the fast of *Ramadhan* must be completed first [by observing the fast of *Ramadhan* and making up for any missed fasts], then after that one may fast the six days of *Shawwaal* so as to obtain the reward mentioned in the *hadeeth*. However, if a person has an excuse that kept him from fasting the six days of *Shawwaal* in *Shawwaal* because he had to make up for the missed fasts, he may fast six days of *Shawwaal* in the month of *Dhul-Qi'dah*. An example of this is a woman who went through postnatal bleeding (*nifaas*) following childbirth and spent all of *Shawwaal* making up for the entire *Ramadhan*. Similarly, anyone who has a legitimate excuse is permitted to make up for the six days of *Shawwaal* in *Dhul-Qi'dah*, after making up for the missed days of *Ramadhan*. However, the person who lets the month of *Shawwaal* go by without fasting these days and with no Islamically acceptable reason whatsoever will not obtain this reward.
Sheikh Muhammad S. al-Munajjid

Fasting the Six Days of *Shawwaal* after Making up for the Days Missed in *Ramadhan*

Q. Can a person who missed some days of Ramadhan and wants to fast the six days of *Shawwaal* fast the six days of *Shawwaal* before making up the missed days of Ramadhan, given that one can make up for the missed days any time of the year while the six days of *Shawwaal* can only be observed in *Shawwaal*?

A. One should make up for the missed days before fasting the six days of *Shawwaal* because the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, **"Whoever fasts *Ramadhan* and follows it with six days of *Shawwaal*, it will be as if he fasted a whole year."** (Muslim) Thus, if one fasts the six days of *Shawwaal* before making up for the missed days of *Ramadhan*, he would be violating the sequence mentioned in the *hadeeth* [because the missed days are in fact a part of *Ramadhan*]. In addition, since the obligatory fasting is more important than any voluntary fasting, it should always be given precedence. Allah knows best.

Q. What should a woman who missed a number of days of fasting in *Ramadhan* due to her menstruation do regarding the *Sunnah* of fasting six days in the month of *Shawwaal*?

A. This woman seems to be keen to get the reward mentioned in the *hadeeth* of Allah's Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, who said, **"Whoever fasts *Ramadhan* and follows it with six days of *Shawwaal*, it will be as if he fasted the whole year."** (Muslim) This woman should first make up for the days she missed in *Ramadhan* and then fast the supererogatory six days in *Shawwaal*. In this way, she can gain the reward mentioned in the previous *hadeeth*, *inshaa'-Allah*. It is permissible, however, to fast the six days of *Shawwaal* first and delay making up for the days she missed in *Ramadhan*, provided that she should make up for them as soon as possible. Allah knows best.
Sheikh Muhammad S. al-Munajjid

Zakaat-ul-Fitr

Q. Is *Zakaat-ul-Fitr* obligatory or just recommended, and who are the persons that are obliged to pay it?

A. *Zakaat-ul-Fitr* is obligatory upon Muslims because the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, prescribed it upon the male and the female and the young and the old. And he specified it to be one *saa'* of food or dates or barley or *iqt* (dried yoghurt or cottage cheese) or raisins. (One *saa'* is equal to four *mudds*, approximately 3 kg). He also commanded that this obligation be discharged before people leave to perform the *'Eed* prayer. Therefore, it is an obligation which has been legislated as a means of purification for the fasting person from any mistakes or shortcomings. It is also a source of provision for the [poor and the] needy so that they do not have to wander around begging. We pray to Allah to grant us success.
Sheikh Ibn Jibreen

Deputizing Others to Pay *Zakat-ul Fitr* on One's Behalf

Q. Some mosques announce their readiness to receive the equivalent cost of *Zakat-ul Fitr* from people in order to distribute it among the needy on their behalf, in the form of commodities such as rice and flour. Is this practice correct?

A. This arrangement usually entails collection, purchase and distribution of the food to those who are in need and are eligible to receive *Zakat-ul Fitr*. Since the intention behind this is to facilitate this process for those who pay *Zakat-ul Fitr*, then it is permissible. May Allah accept it from all of us. Allah knows best.
Sheikh Muhammad S. al-Munajjid

Sending *Zakaat-ul-Fitr* Back Home

Q. I sent *Zakaat-ul-Fitr* to my family back home so that they could pay it on my behalf there. Is this action correct?

A. There is no problem with this, and you will get the reward for doing so, *inshaa-Allaah*. However, giving it to the needy in your area is better. If you send it to your family to give it to the needy in your country, there is still no problem with this.
Sheikh Ibn Baaz

The Payment of *Zakaat-ul-Fitr* in Cash

Q. Is it permissible to discharge the obligation of *Zakaat-ul-Fitr* on the first day of *Ramadhan*? Is it also permissible to distribute it in cash?

A. There is a difference of opinion concerning the payment of Zakaat-*ul-Fitr* on the first day of *Ramadhan*. The most correct opinion, however, is that it is not permissible, because it is called *Zakaat-ul-Fitr*, and *al-Fitr* (ending of the fast) does not occur except at the end of the month. Also, Allah's Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, ordered that it be discharged before people go out to offer the *'Eed-ul-Fitr* prayer. The Prophet's companions also used to give out the *Zakaat-ul-Fitr* one or two days before the *'Eed* day. There is also a difference of opinion concerning the payment of *Zakaat-ul-Fitr* in cash or food. The correct opinion, in my estimation, is that it should be paid in the form of food. This is because Ibn 'Umar *radiyallaahu 'anhumaa*, said, "Allah's Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, made it obligatory on all, the slave or Free Muslims, male or female, to pay one *saa'* of dates or barley as *Zakaat-ul-Fitr*." (Al-Bukhaaree) (One *saa'* is equal to four *mudds*, approximately 3 kg). Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree, *radiyallaahu 'anhu*, also said, "In the lifetime of the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, we used to give one *saa'* of food or one *saa'* of dates, or one *saa'* of barley, or one *saa'* of raisins [per head] as *Zakaat-ul-Fitr*." (Al-

Bukhaaree) Therefore, it is clear from these two *hadeeth* that *Zakaat-ul-Fitr* is not discharged except in the form of food. When it is distributed in this way, it is displayed openly, all members of the family know about it, and there is a manifestation of this aspect of the religion. On the contrary, when it is paid in cash, it is concealed, and perhaps the person may favor himself, by paying it in cash, and thus reduce its amount. [As the amount would differ if we compare the value of one *saa'* of dates to one *saa'* of barley, for example] Since one *saa'* of barley is about 7 Saudi Riyals ($2.00), while one *saa'* of dates ranges—according to quality—from 25 Saudi Riyals ($7.00) for a lesser quality to 42 Saudi Riyals ($12.00) for a medium quality, to 175 Saudi Riyals ($49.00) for the best quality per *saa'*). Therefore, strictly following the Law (al-Qur'an and *Sunnah*) is best and it is blessed. Someone might argue that the distribution of *Zakaat-ul-Fitr* in the form of food does not benefit the poor. However, the truly poor person must definitely benefit from the food.

Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

What to Say upon Sighting the Moon of *Shawwaal*

Q. We would like to know what kind of supplications a Muslim should engage in from the time the moon of *Shawwaal* has been sighted until before the *'Eid* prayer?

A. One should engage in reciting the *takbeer* (*Allaahu Akbar* 'Allah is the greatest'), the *tahleel* (*laa ilaaha ill-Allaah* 'there is none truly worthy of worship except Allah'), the *tahmeed* (*al-hamdu-lillaah* 'all praise is for Allah'). Allah, *subhaanahu wa ta'aalaa*, says, **"[He wants that you] must complete the same number of days, and that you must glorify Allah for having guided you, so that you may be grateful to Him."** (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:185)

Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen

Failure to Discharge *Zakaat-ul-Fitr* before the *'Eed* Prayer

Q. If one does not discharge *Zakaat-ul-Fitr* before the *'Eed* prayer, does he become relieved [of this obligation]?

A. The person who does not pay *Zakaat-ul-Fitr* before the *'Eed* prayer is sinful and he is not relieved [of this obligation]. He must discharge it afterwards.
Sheikh Ibn Jibreen

Recommended Acts on *'Eed-ul-Fitr* Day

Q. What is recommended for us to do on *'Eed-ul-Fitr* day?

A. On the day of *'Eed-ul-Fitr*, Muslims express their joy as well as thankfulness to Allah for completing the fast, the night prayers, and all other forms of worship. For these are undoubtedly amongst the greatest blessings which Allah has bestowed on His servants. First, they begin by reciting the *takbeer* on the night before the *'Eed* and carry on in this way until the following day before the *'Eed* prayer. Then they [eat a few dates] before proceeding to perform the *'Eed-ul-Fitr* prayer. This takes place outside the town [in an open area] with both men and women in attendance. Then they return [full of] joy and happiness at this blessing, exchanging greetings and congratulating one another on the occasion. They also visit one another [throughout] the day as a sign of the end of this act of worship (fasting).
Sheikh Ibn Jibreen

Women Leaving for the *'Eed-ul-Fitr* Prayer

Q. Is it permissible for women to leave their homes for the *'Eed-ul-Fitr* prayer?

A. Yes, indeed. Attending the *'Eed-ul-Fitr* prayer has been

legislated for both men and women. Umm 'Atiyyah, *radiyallaahu 'anhaa*, said, "We were commanded to leave [our homes] on the *'Eed-ul-Fitr* day. Even the virgin was commanded to leave her private quarters and even the menstruating woman was encouraged to attend, so they would recite the *takbeer* and supplicate, seeking the blessing of that day and its purification." (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)
Sheikh Ibn Jibreen

Concurrence of *'Eed-ul-Fitr* and Friday

Q. If any one of the two *'Eeds* falls on a Friday (*Jumu'ah*), should the *Jumu'ah* prayer be offered with its *khutbah* on that day or not?

A. If the *'Eed* coincides with Friday Muslims must pray the *'Eed-ul-Fitr* prayer and the *Jumu'ah* prayer in the mosque where the *Jumu'ah* prayer is normally held. It is also permissible for someone who attended the *'Eed* prayer to leave off the *Jumu'ah* prayer and perform the *Dhuhr* prayer instead.
Sheikh Ibn Baaz



Your Guide to an Islamic Life

Al-Jumu'ah Magazine is intended to satisfy a longstanding need on the part of the English reader who wants to know about Islam.

Al-Jumu'ah focuses on topics such as da'wah, 'aqeedah, fiqh, and many others. Special attention however, is given to issues of interest to the entire family.

Al-Jumu'ah aims to bridge the readers with renowned Islamic scholars through their fataawaa (legal opinions).

Al-Jumu'ah deals with cases of trade and finance from the Islamic point of view. Easy and halaal (lawful) ways of personal investment are explained and illustrated.

Great stories of early Muslims are narrated in a fascinating manner.

Islamic knowledge is necessary for all Muslims. However, because of the central role of women in the family and the society, Al-Jumu'ah gives them their share of it.

Book reviews and translations are included, thus enriching each issue with the great works of scholars, both past and present.